

Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission
Meeting Minutes – FINAL
(Approved with adding Henry Tanaka name to #II, paragraph 4)

December 5, 2014, 9:00 A.M. – 11:30 A.M.

Novi Public Library, 45255 W. Ten Mile Rd.,
East Meeting Room, Novi, MI 48375

Attendance

Present: Asim Alavi, Nasim Ansari, Connie Dang, Willie Dechavez, Hannah Feikema, Jamie Hsu, Roland Hwang, Soraya Kim, Grace Lee, David Long, Guozhen Lu, Toshiki Masaki, Mahima Mahadevan, Ryan Rosario, Joe Tasma, Jeffrey Vang and Tsu-Yin Wu, Ph.D. RN

Guests: Annie Fenton-Upwardly Global, Lee Gonzales-MDCR Legislative Liaison, Michigan State Senator Hoon-Yung Hopgood, Rebecca Tancredi-Upwardly Global, Ramesh Verma and Sheryl Weirs, MPH-MDCH Health Disparities Reduction and Minority Health Section

Staff: Mary McLellan, MAPAAC Commission Liaison-MDCR, Denise Yee Grim, MAPAAC Community Liaison

Unable to attend: Mamatha Chamarthi and Anand Kumar

I. Call to Order

Chairperson Jamie Hsu called the regular meeting of the Michigan Asian Pacific American Affairs Commission to order at 9:10 a.m. on December 5, 2014.

II. Introduction of Today's Agenda and Chairman's Comments

Chair Jamie Hsu shared the day's agenda, which included the regular commission meeting, lunch and internal working discussions with the SIGs. He also commented that the executive committee has been working on for the last past months of synchronizing year-end activities, which included the development of a new budget, completion of the annual report and new appointments of commissioners by working with the Governor's appointment office.

He thanked the commissioners for their contributions and time with the 2014 SIG's initiatives. He stated that the APA community is enthusiastic of what MAPAAC can do for them and with them.

On a personal note, Jamie talked about his performance review by the executive committee. The outcome were: socialize with all the commissioners – face-to-face. and don't repeat the same thing, over and over again. He appreciated the input and will continue to lead MAPAAC forward.

Recognition of Departing Commissioners: Five commissioners completed their terms. They were Mumtaz Haque, **Henry Tanaka**, Ramesh Verma, Sook Wilkinson and Peter Wong. We applauded their service and contribution to MAPAAC. To recognize of their contributions, MAPAAC has designed a memento for their contribution. Jamie presented the memento to Ramesh Verma at the meeting. Jamie will award the remaining mementos to the departing commissioners at another time.

Jamie welcomed Grace Lee, Mahima Mahadevan and Joe Tasma as our new commissioners and welcomed our guest, Lee Gonzales, MDCR Legislative Liaison.

III. Approval of September 13, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Asim Alavi asked if there were any additional comments or changes to the draft minutes.

Correction: Guozhen Lu name needed to be added to the attendance of the meeting. Roland Hwang motioned to approve the meeting minutes with the correction and Nasim Ansari seconded. Motion passed.

IV. Review MAPAAC Bylaws – Roles and Responsibilities of Commissioners

The commissioners received a copy of the bylaws to use as a reference. Jamie highlighted a few items on the bylaws, which included the membership of the commissioners and the expectations. The members must attend all commission meetings. If they miss three meetings within the year, unless there is unusual circumstances and agreed upon by the Chair, the Chair can recommend the removal of the commissioner to the appointment office. Jamie informed the appointment office that there is one commissioner who have not attended any of our meetings and she has not responded to our calls or emails. It was decided that we will not include her in with MAPAAC's communication in the future.

Nomination of Executive Committee

The Chairperson is appointed by the Governor at his pleasure and there is no term limit. Jamie shared that his term as a commissioner ends on November 2015. Regarding the other officers, vice chair, secretary and trustee, Jamie nominated the current officers to serve another term with him since he worked with them for a short period of time in 2014 and he would like to continue working together. The goal is to synchronize the election process with the state of MI fiscal calendar and the terms of the commissioners.

A verbal slate of the executive committee to serve from November 30, 2014 – November 30, 2015 was presented: Vice-Chair: Connie Dang, Secretary: Asim Alavi and Trustee: Tsu-Yin Wu. Guozhen Lu motion to accept the slate and Jeff Vang seconded. Motion passed.

Nasim Ansari commented that Article IV 4.3 states the elected officers shall be elected for a calendar year, January to December by secret ballot. It was agreed that we need to amend the bylaws to state: the elected officers shall be elected from November 30 to November 30 by the commission. Roland will assist in amending the bylaws and we can present it at the next commission meeting.

Julie Farkas, Novi Public Library Director, arrived and welcomed the commissioners to the library. She invited the commissioners to a 20 minutes tour of the library at 1:00 p.m. Jamie thanked Ramesh for making the arrangements to host the meeting in the library.

V. 2014 Budget Review

Tsu-Yin Wu referred the spreadsheet of the 2014 budget and presented the 2014 year-end report. MAPAAC was appropriated \$103,800.00 and spent \$78,400.00. Jamie explained that end of the year balance was due to the pay of the staff person Denise Yee Grim who started in January, which caused a gap of money left over. For the 2015 budget, we will closely monitor our spending and allocation to spend the entire fund.

Mary commented that 2014 financials will be closed soon and we will have a final report at the March meeting.

VI. Update on Student Survey

Roland Hwang gave a background of the reasons why a student survey was developed from SIG3 initiatives. The survey was sent to various student organizations at WSU, OCC, and Northern MI University, and Med School of WSU so far. The survey was sent out in the end of August and the responses were requested by the end of the year. He asked the commissioners to share any students or student organizations contacts, so he may send the survey out.

He received one response from the Korean Students Association of MSU. . Roland sent a copy of the survey to the commissioners and invited them to add additional questions to the survey. Guozhen asked for the survey and will follow-up in WSU.

Willie asked if we can expand the survey to middle and high schools, because there are incidents related to question 4 – “have you been a subject of hate incidents or anti-Asian incidents”. He said that if MAPAAC decides to expand the survey to the middle and high school levels, the survey will need to be approved by the school districts. Jamie said it was a good suggestion.

Connie Dang reiterated that the original intention of the survey came out of Proposal 2 in the State of Michigan. In 2007, the state approved Prop. 2 to not award scholarships to students based on race or ethnicity. She suggested to study the impact of Prop. 2 on the Asian student population in Michigan colleges to see if the lack of certain scholarships impact their involvement in universities and colleges.

Jamie thanked Roland on working diligently on this survey and thanked everyone supporting him. He said that earlier we looked at the enrollment data published from the colleges/universities to find any unusual gaps in Asian student’s enrollments. The data itself did not tell us enough, so we are taking a deeper dive to hear directly from the student organizations and asking them “what are the issues?” Jamie encouraged SIG3 to do the survey, for the following reasons:

- 1) When people receive the survey, it introduces them to MAPAAC and makes them realize that MAPAAC may be a group to contact with their issues.
- 2) The state, Governor, and ONA are working hard on attracting new students to MI and to retain students in MI. We can provide the enrollment data to help them with their initiatives.
- 3) We will continue our SIGs in 2015. This survey is not the end of the road. Any work with high schools or counselors would be folded into the SIGs. The work will continue and it is up to the SIG to decide how to do it.

Jamie continued by saying that we need to be careful in doing surveys. We can only do surveys through organizations and counselors. We cannot interview individuals, because that requires approval from the IRB, Institutional Research Board.

VII. Update on Korematsu Dedications

Roland shared that we are hosting three Korematsu presentations. On January 29th, we will have a presentation at Troy high school and it will be skyped to the International Academy East and Athens high school at Noon. This event is open to the students only. On January 30th, we will have an event at the Grand Valley State University with the Office of Multicultural Affairs at 11:30 a.m.; next the team will commute to MSU for the Asian Pacific American Studies Program at 4:00 p.m. Both these events are open to the public.

Roland shared the background of Fred T. Korematsu. There are official Fred T. Korematsu Day in CA, HI, and IL. There is an effort to make January 30th a Fred T. Korematsu Day nationally. At this time, Michigan has chosen to have a day of recognition, not a Korematsu Day

Willie shared that there are free teaching materials for elementary to high school about the Fred Korematsu case. Jamie encouraged the commissioners to attend one of the presentations and to let people know about MAPAAC existence. We can follow-up with the schools and universities with student survey by talking to the counselors about discrimination and bullying issues of the students.

VIII. Administrative Update

Mary McLellan introduced herself to the new commissioners and asked them to fill out the form for to order business cards. She said that we can have our personal address on the business cards instead of the MDCR address. Many of the commissioners do not pass out the business cards, because people interpret that the commissioners work for civil rights and not for MAPAAC. Mary said that she will look into revising the business cards to highlight MAPAAC instead of MDCR. She shared the consulate general of Japan invitations that was sent to the state of MI address. Ryan Rosario recommended to scan the invitation and email it to the commissioners in the future.

IX. Report on MAPAAC Survey Progress

Denise thanked the Ad-hoc committee and shared the fifth draft of the survey. The survey is complete and we are ready to distribute them. She will work with Steve Mitchell to complete the online survey. Hard copies are available and it can be translated in the native languages. Denise asked the commissioners to contact her for copies and translation. The goal is to have the results by the March commissioners meeting. The survey goal is 1000 responses. Jamie asked to distribute it in the APA community centers.

Denise will write out the survey results from the CAPA Leadership Summit and email them to the commissioners.

Jamie invited Senator Hopgood to share a legislative update. Senator Hopgood gave a legislative update on issues with road repair funding. He is looking forward to the new session in January with a newly-elected APA legislator. He shared that he, APIA Vote, and MAPAAC is putting together an APA Caucus. The caucus will be in Lansing and it will be a direct link for the APA community to talk about their concerns. The caucus will be bi-partisan, including the three APA legislators who will extend an invitation to other legislators (non-Asian) based on the size of the APA population in their respective districts.

X. 2014 Annual Report

Connie shared the responsibilities as the vice-chair is to submit an annual report to the Governor. She asked the SIGs to submit activities for the report that she can summarize into a two-page annual report. She asked the commissioners to review the report and get back with Denise by Friday, so she may submit it to Mary.

XI. Follow-up of the Strategic Planning Meeting

Since we ran out of time at our strategic planning meeting, the executive committee looked over the results from the meeting and grouped up the information to create a framework for the new four Strategic Initiatives Groups (SIGs). Jamie explained the four groups: 1) Work with the state agencies and legislators to review their programs and policies; 2) work with the communities to capture their voices and concerns; 3) address all the issues of the APA community-discrimination and inequality; and 4) to promote the contributions of APAs to the state of MI.

All commissioners must be in one of the four SIGs. Also, if there is an initiative of interest in another SIG, the commissioners may assist and participate in that initiative; the commissioners are not limited to one SIG. Every initiative is driven by the SIGs. Jamie introduced the facilitators for each SIGs: SIG1-Toshiki, SIG2 –Ryan, SIG3 - Roland, SIG4 – Soraya. After the meeting, the commissioners will need to determine which SIGs they would like to join. The SIGs should meet regularly on their own to work on their initiatives and not meet only at our quarterly meetings.

Each executive committee members are assigned for each SIGs to understand the intent, to have consistency and no overlap- SIG1: Connie, SIG2: Asim, SIG3: Tsu-Yin, and SIG4: Jamie

Denise offered assistance to SIGs in scheduling conference calls, reserving meeting facilities and any other details needed for their planning.

XII. Review and Discuss 2015 Budget

A preliminary budget was presented. The majority of the budget is to support the SIGs' initiatives and once the SIGs submit their summary of initiatives; the money will be allocated accordingly. Tsu-Yin stated the 2015 budget is \$110,000. Each SIG is tentatively budgeted \$10K each to help support their initiatives. However, each SIG may ask for additional funds if required by presenting a summary of the initiative to justify why they need the money.

Tsu-Yin encouraged the SIGs and EC members to discuss a timeline for their initiative, so we can track the activities between the commission meetings to make sure that the money we budgeted for each group is well spent.

Denise asked the commissioners to direct any organizations to her for a financial/invoicing to ensure they are a vendor of the state and the invoice is submitted properly.

Jamie explained the rainy day fund on the budget.

XIII. Determine 2015 Regular commissioner Meetings

A list of four dates were presented. Jamie asked the commissioners to mark the following dates on their calendar and he shared his view on the emphasis of each meeting as follows:

- Friday, March 13th: Interact with the state agencies and legislators
- Friday, June 19th: Midterm for commission's activities
- Saturday, September 12th: Invite Southeast (local) APA community leaders
- Friday, December 4th: review 2015 accomplishments

Denise informed the commissioners that Mary is working on securing the Governor's residence for the March 13th meeting. Meeting time is normally 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. The strategic retreat is tentative schedule along with the commission meeting on Sept. 12th. There is a possibility to separate meeting for the strategic retreat. Nasim requested to have a June meeting in Kalamazoo. We need to consider traveling limitation for the commissioners and a reason to be there. Guozhen suggested to have the meeting at Wayne State in September. Willie supports Guozhen's suggestion to have the WSU president, who is Japanese American, take part of our meeting to get him involved and get to know MAPAAC.

XIV. New Business:

Upwardly Global Presentation by Annie Fenton, Senior Associate of Employment Services. Annie shared Upwardly Global initiative of providing training for skilled immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers to restart their career in the U.S. and provide a job seeker bank to help U.S. employers find qualified talent. At the end of her presentation, Jamie suggested that Upwardly Global should work with SIG4, since they are working on professional growth, mentoring and talents, contributions. MAPAAC will work with Upwardly Global, LARA and Office of New Americans (ONA). We would like to tailor it to APAs.

Sheryl Weirs, MPH of MDCH Health Disparities Reduction and Minority Health Section. Sheryl spoke about their office, which was established in 1988 by an executive order. Their mandate is to identify population in need and determine the best services for targeted groups. One of the groups is the Asian Pacific Islanders (API). One of the strategic initiatives is to get real good health data on minority populations, so they can develop programs to serve them. They have tried phone surveys and other methods but have not have much success. She was seeking MAPAAC's guidance to achieve a strong and better data from their survey, because they budgeted money to do another survey for the APIs. Ideas include: Asian translation of the survey and identifying sub groups within the Asian Pacific American population.

Jamie commented SIG2 can help Sheryl with her request in reaching out to the APAs in MI since one of their areas of interest is health care. Jamie suggested to SIG2 is to involve MAI Family Services and the Asian Center-SE. The issue is not just health, there are cultural issues and language barriers; Asians generally do not like to talk about their health problems, so they will don't share their information on surveys. Commissioners were advised to work through SIG2 if they would like to contribute to this project.

XV. Public Comments

Lee Gonzales thanked the Chair for the invitation to attend the MAPAAC meeting. He shared information about a bill by representative Haveman, chair of the house appropriation committee. It is projected that if Michigan legislature can pass these package of bills, we might be able to save \$100 million by fiscal year 2020. There is an opportunity to use some of this money to serve higher education and other core services. He will share his notes from our meeting and share them with the other commissions, namely the Hispanic commission.

XVI. Announcements

Soraya announced that Roland Hwang was elected to the Northville school board.

Willie announced a Filipino American was elected to the Troy's board of education.

Connie announced that MAPAAC will be sponsoring ONA and LARA Ethnic Cabinet quarterly meeting in January, 2015 in Lansing.

Denise announced the Rizal Day event and Willie has tickets available

Happy Birthday to Nasim and Jamie

A motion from Ryan Rosario to adjourn the meeting, Willie seconded. Motion passed.

The meeting concluded at 11:35 A.M.

Minutes prepared by: Denise Yee Grim, February 2, 2015

Minutes submitted by:

Asim Alavi, Secretary